A PROFI-TABLE, AND comfortable Letter

for afflicted consciences: writ-ten and sent to a godly man, greatly touched that way. 1582.

GOD IS MY HELPE. Psal. 71.

AT LONDON;
Printed by *Robert Walde-graue* for Thomas Man, dwelling in Pater-noster Row, at the signe of

IMMANVEL.

Cánot but iudge by ſome ſpeeches which I haue hard from you, to my comfort, that the Lord hath greatly exerciſed youre conſciẽce, & therfore haue thought good, according to the experience that God hath giuen mee, to craue your mind in certain queſtions, tending not only to knowledge, but to the comfort of the afflicted ſoule. The queſtions are theſe.

First, vvhether the ſpirite of God, 1
once giuen vnto the Children of God; bee afterwardes taken from them; or do goe and come; as ſome haue imagined?

Secondly; vvhether the children 2
of God; do ſundry times, or twiſe at the leaſte; fall into one; and the ſelfe ſame tranſgreſſion?

Thirdlye, vvhether euery actuall 3
ſinne; comitted of knowledge; maye iuſtly be counted a ſin of preſumpti-

on; & whither Gods ſeruaunt commit preſumptuous ſinnes?

Fourthly, whether the child of God
4 may ſay, that he is ſure, that hee hath the ſpirite of God? and by vvhat meanes he may be aſſured thereof?

5 And laſtlye, becauſe you youre ſelfe ſaide, that a godly man might receiue greate comforte by his afflictions, either outwarde or inwarde, ſpecially the invvard, I would gladly knovv, vvhat thoſe conſolations or comforts are?

Of theſe queſtions if it vvoulde pleaſe you to vvrite me your mind, (for I haue heard ſome ſay, that writing remaineth) & that largely, yea, and vvith ſome ſpeede alſo, if conueniently you could, I ſhould thinke my ſelfe ſo much beholding to you, as to no man more. But becauſe I reſt perſvvaded of youre vnfeigned readines to ſuch good vvorks, I vvill not preſſe you much. Pray for me, I praye for you; that God may graciouſly ſtrengthen me in this battell. Haſtily the xxviii. of April. 1582.

Your louing friende,
and brother in Christ.

¶ An answere to the former Letter.

¶ *Grace and peace* from God our fa-

ther, and from his deare sonne Iesus Christ our Lord, be multiplied vppon you (good brother) and all those whersoeuer, that in a syncere feeling doe sigh and grone vnder the burden of their transgressions.

F it haue pleased the Lord in great mercye, both towardes you and mee, to open my mouth, and to inable me, to speake anye thing, that might tend to your instruc-

tion and comfort, I do most humblye and reuerentlye thanke his maiestie, for the same, prayinge the increase and continuaunce of that, and all other good graces, both in me and you, and all the rest of his seruauntes whersoeuer, that in our hearing and speaking he may bee continuallye glorified, and we our selues still confirmed in iudgement, and comforted in feeling, that so we may be made able, to strengthen and comfort others, which are in any affliction, euen by the comfort wherewith wee our selues are comforted of God. 2. Cor. 1. 4.

What my exercise hath bin, in inward afflictions, it

is

is ſufficient for me, that the Lord (who hath iuſtly heretofore layd the ſame vppon me, for my grieuous tranſgreſſions, and hath now of late in ſome meaſure, mercifully mitigated the great burthen & weight of them) doth know them. And yet this I maye ſpeake, in all modeſtye of mynde before men, that I am not vtterly ignorant of ſatans ſleights, but as I haue ſome ſight into them, ſo I doe withall, ſomewhat ſee mine owne grieuous corruption: And if eyther by the ſight of the one, or knowledge of the other, I haue heretofore ſpoken any thing, or ſhall now write any thing, that may tend to your good, I am and

ſhall

shal be very glad. Howbeit, this I muste saye, that I would and do gladly wishe, that you had made choyse, of some man better qualified, both in knowledge and feeling, whose iudgement you might haue desired, in these high and excellent matters. For (to speake the truethy, and that from the bottome of my heart) this is the opiniō that I haue of my selfe, that my grieuous sinnes on the one side, and my great insufficiencie on the other side, haue so strengthned my vnderstanding, and stopped vp my mouth, that I am farre vnfitte to meddle in these matters: to which also you may ad the difficulty and hardnes of the thinges

them

themselues, inough to discourage me, from dealing therein.

And yet notwithstanding, sith it hath pleased God to moue you, to desire the same at my handes: and sith that that which I cannot now doe, maye (if the Lord will) bee hereafter supplyed, by men of greater giftes, both in iudgement & feeling, or by my selfe, if God in time to come, increase his mercyes in me, and vppon me, I haue, setting aside all difficulties and doubtes, hoping also vppon the Lordes good assistaunce, by his holye Spirite, attempted to deale in youre questions propounded, according to that mea-

ſure of lighte, and vnder-
ſtandinge that the Lorde
hath giuen me: though not
ſo quickly, largely, and ful-
ly, I muſt confeſſe, as both
the worthineſſe of the mat-
ters themſelues requireth,
and you perhaps gladly de-
ſire, yet with that meaſure
of iudgement and ſpeed al-
ſo, that poſſibly I coulde,
and God hath gyuen mee
grace to performe, hoping
that you will take it, in ſuch
good parte, as I meane it,
(ſpecially ſeeinge you re-
queſted the ſame) and refer
it to ſuch endes, as it ought
to be, that is to ſay, to Gods
glory, the good of his chil-
dren. and your owne com-
fort in Chriſt.

Now to your queſtions.

Con-

Concerning the firſte, for myne owne part I reſt perſwaded, & that by the truth of Gods worde, that the lord neuer taketh his ſpirite, frō thoſe his Seruauntes, to whome he hath once giuen the ſame. The reaſons of this you ſhall heare hereafter. But before I come to put them down, I wil ſhew you in a fewe wordes, how diuerſly the word (Spirite) is taken in holy ſcripture, by whiche I doubt not, but you ſhall alſo ſee many good thinges, tending to the clearing of this queſtion, both as concerning the maintenaunce of the truth it ſelfe, and alſo touching the remouing of ſuch obiections, as are, or may bee

made

made against it, that so you may be better able to discerne of my meaning, and know the state of your own demaund.

1 Sometimes it is vsed for the holy ghost, the third person in the Godhead, who is of the selfe same maiestie, eternity, substance &c. with the Father and the son, but yet proceeding from them both: and so is it taken. *Gen.* 1.2. where it is said: the spirite of God moued vpon the waters: and *Rom.* 8.26: the Spirit helpeth our infirmities.

2 Sometimes it is put, for some outward gifts and graces, that are giuen and wrought, by the same spirite, in sundry mens harts: as the gift of working myracles,

racles, the gifte of speaking seuerall tongues, the gifte of iudgement, & vnderstanding, &c. And in this sense, it is sayde. *Num* 11. 17. that God toke of ỹ spirit, which was vpon *Moses*, and gaue vnto the seuenty Elders, to whom he deuided, and gaue in charge, part of ỹ gouernment of the people of Israel: and so I take it to bee vsed, in these wordes, *Luke*. 1. 17. speaking of *Iohn Baptist* saying, that hee shoulde goe before Christe, in the spirite and power of *Elias*, that is, in suche excellente giftes, as *Elias* had. Sometimes it is vsed for 3
suche fruites and effectes of obedience and mortification as wee are inabled,

by

by the Spirite to yeeld and shew forth, a large Catalogue and recitall whereof the Apostle putteth downe, *Gala.*5.22.23. and so it seemeth in my iudgement to be taken. 1. *Thes.*5.19. wher we are commaunded not to quench the spirite, that is to saye, such good motions to goodnesse, and execution of good thinges, as the spirite prouoketh vs to, and worketh in vs. 4 Sometimes it is put, for the testimonie and pledge of the spirit, bearing record to our spirites, that we are the sonnes of God: In which sense *Paule* sayth *Rom.*8.16. that the Spirite beareth witnesse with our spirite, that we are the children of God: And therefore

Ephe.

*Ephe.*1.14. he is called, the earnest penny of our inheritaunce: which speech also you haue. 2. *Cor.* 1.22.

And though, I doe here in speech, sunder the pledge of the spirite, from the effectes of the same: yet my meaning is, that the very pledge it selfe is an effect of the spirite also. But I do it, for the comfort of Gods children, who, the more that matters are particularised, shall not onely the better conceiue of the same, but in deed reape greater comfort, and consolation thereby.

Now the gyftes and graces of the spirite, are called by the name of the Spirite: as also, the fruites, effectes, and pledge of the spirite, are

termed

termed by the same name, because loke who so euer hath them in any measure, more or lesse, he hath them by the gracious working, of the same Spirite, as the Apostle plainely proueth, in the first part of the xii. chapter, of his first epistle to the *Corinthians*.

True it is, that all these, are seuerall and distinct graces, yet so, that as the fruits effectes, and pledge of the Spirite, appertayne properly and onely, to the sons and seruauntes of God, so the outward graces of working myracles, speache, vnderstanding, &c. are many times bestowed, and that in very great measure, as well vppon the wicked, as vpon

the

the godlie: Which thinge to be true, our sauiour himselfe playnelye affirmeth, when *Math.*7.22. he sayth: Many will saye to mee in that day, Lorde, Lorde, haue not wee in thy name Prophecied? And by thy name cast out Diuilles? And by thy name done many great workes? Wherin no doubt, the Lorde doth wonderfully manifest, as his mercye, on the one side towardes his children: Who manye tymes, will not haue them in outwarde gyftes, inferiour to any amongst ỳ wicked, least in the sight of the wickeds flourishing, they might be discouraged, & by that meanes fal away from godnes, making also their

gifts

giftes receiued, sure tokens vnto them of better graces, while they referre them, to the aduauncement of hys glory, the good of his Seruaunts. and the gayning of many vnto him, a good seale certainely vnto thē, of their eternall saluation: So on the other side, his great iustice towardes the wicked, whilest hee bestoweth these outward mercies vpō them. not onelye to make them without excuse (for hauing receyued those Graces of light and knowledge, they cannot pretend ignorance) but also to heape vp their owne condemnation, and to make it more heauie vnto them selues, euen for the abusing of those meanes and mercies,

mercies, whilst they reserue the glorye thereof to themselues, and for going on in a continual course, directly against their conscience. For it is a iust thing with God, that (as our Saviour sayth, *Luke.* 12.47) he that knoweth the will of his Lord and maister, and doth it not, shoulde be beaten with many strypes.

But to let these passe, and to come, to the other two, to wit, the fruites and effectes of the spirite first, and afterwardes to the pledge of the same, and to speake of them severally, that so you maye the better understand me: I say, that howsoeuer they be proper and peculier to Gods children, as by which the

Lord

Lord hath distincted them from the rest of ỳ prophane people of the world, yet they are not in all of them, nor in any of them in like measure at all times: but sometimes they themselues feele them, in greater force and power, & somtimes in lesse, yea sometimes little or no whit at all, and so likewise they seeme vnto other, that are acquainted with them. A more playne proofe hereof, we can hardly haue, then the experience that God giueth vs, in sundry particulars within our selues, eyther of prayer, hearing his worde or such like, wee finding our selues sometimes so wel affected thereto, as in thinking vpon it, we reioice

in

in God, that hath giuen vs such graces: And somtimes againe we feeling oure selues so heauy, dull, and vnapt, to those holy exercises, that we are displeased with oure selues, for the want of more spiritual feeling.

And that which I speake of these spirituall exercises, we must vnderstand also of our wrestlings & fightings against sinne, (for euen they are effects & fruits of the spirite likewise) somtimes wee preuailing, throw the strēgth of our God, & by the power of his worde & spirite: somtimes in oure owne weakneſſe, we being sore woũded wᵗ the assaults of Satan, & the blowes of our owne corruption: the Lorde no

no doubt vsing, and making vs to feele, this entercourse of a spirituall liuelines, and our natural dulnes, as likewise of stãding and falling, as a notable instrument & meane, not onely to cause vs to see his mercy, that so we maye embrace and make much of the same, but also our owne misery and weaknesse, that so we may labour what in vs lyeth, the suppressing thereof. For if we were altogether strong, we shoulde ware proud aboue measure, and thinke godlynesse to be a naturall gyft, or els grow at the length, to great securitie and carelesnes, and therefore for the preuenting of pride, and auoyding of securitie, it pleaseth

seth God sometymes to hũble vs And if we were altogether weake, and did fall continually vnder our assaultes & temptations, we shoulde be overwhelmed, in the sight of our infimities, with distrust and desperation: and therefore for the auoyding of that great sinne, the Lord many times graũteth his children, wonderful comfort in the consideration of his mercyes towardes them and the great strength that he giueth them.

Now a worde or two, for the testimony and pledge of the spirite. I say, that euen this also, doth sometymes more liuelie and effectuallie appeare in Gods children, and sometymes they seme

vnto

vnto them selues & others, vtterly to want the same. When they feele it not, thē they haue for the most part, their myndes occupyed, vpon the blindnes and hardnesse of their owne hearts, and the greatnesse and grieuousnes of their own transgressions: As on the other side, when they feele it, they haue then the eye of their fayth, fast fixed vppon the aboundaunt riches of Gods eternall mercyes, exhibited in his sonne Christ, and offered also vnto vs, as by the preaching of the word generallie, so specially by publishing, the comfortable promises of the Gospel: which are excellent meanes, to make a man to swallowe vp,

vp, the sight of his Sinnes, and Gods iudgementes a-gainst him for the same, so long, as hee continueth in the contemplation therof.

But for as muche as the Lord seeth it not good, neyther for his owne glory nor our profitte, that we should be altogether occupyed, in ỹ apprehension of his mercies, for so by that meanes we might easely fall into pre-sumption, securitie and for-getfulnes: and on the other syde, ỹ it is not meete, to be wholly occupied, in ỹ behol-ding of our owne wretched-nes, & vnworthynesse, & his wrath against vs for ỹ same for so we might be swallow-ed vp of despair, & vtterly o-uerwhelmed with ỹ raging

flouds, of continual diſtruſt, it pleaſeth him in mercie to geue vs ſometimes the feeling of his mercie and goodneſſe, and in iuſtice, the ſight of our owne ſinne, and his Iudgementes againſt vs for the ſame, that ſo we being inſtructed, that both theſe, to witte, mercie, and iuſtice are in God, we might in ſuch ſort vſe them, as ſhall make moſte for his glorie and our good, referring his mercy, to this end, alwayes to vſe it, as a ſingular meane, not onely to comfort our conſciences in ſmal griefes and ſorrowes, but alſo to kepe vs from the extremitie of deſperation: and his iuſtice to this ende, not onely to keepe vs from

pre-

presumptuous offences, but to hold vs continually, in ỹ awe of a good Conscience, whilst we labour, according to the measure of grace and strength receiued, to walke in the doing of suche good workes, as he hath prepared for vs to performe.

To conclude this poynt withall, this is it (good brother) ỹ I would haue you to obserue, wisely to discerne, betweene ỹ worke of Gods spirit in you, and your own corruption, that you maie learne to make much of the one, fostering & cherishing the same in you, by all holy meanes possible, as earnest prayer, diligent hearinge, reading, and meditating of Gods worde, mutual and

comfortable cõference with the brethren, and such lyke: and to represse the other, making euen this profite by it, not onely to humble you before God and men, but also to prouoke you, with more speed and earnestnes to seke vnto the lord (while he may be found) for spirituall comfort in him and his word.

Now to come more directly and plainely to your question, whether Gods spirite once giuen to Gods childrẽ, be euer taken from them, yea or no: or els go & come, as some haue imagined: I aunswere no: and the reasons leading me so to iudge are sundry, specially these following, beeing drawne frõ the nature of God him selfe,

selfe, and from the certaintie and assuraunce of his graces to his Seruauntes: for there is greate reason, that such as God is himself, such shoulde the graces, that God gyueth his Children, concerninge the hope of a better lyfe be.

First, we know, that the Scripture sayth, in sundry places, that God is not, as a man, that he shoulde repent him of the thinges he doth: 1. *Samuel*. 15.29: and again, that with him there is no variablenesse, neyther shadowing by turning. *Iam*. 1. 17. meaning that there is not to be found in him, the least shewe of alteration or chaũge: which places could not be verified, if so be it, I

that the spirite were taken awaye, after God had once gyuen it. Therefore to the end, that God in his worde, may be founde true, and all men else lyers, let vs holde this fast, as the Ancker of our soul, both sure and stedfast, otherwise we shall accuse God of merueilous inconstancye, & vnfaithfulnes (which is horrible blasphemie, to thinke, or to speake) and besides, shal our selues, be tossed with all manner of wauering and distruste, a fearful, but yet a iust iudgement no doubt, to fall vpon suche, as wil not acknowledge & beleeue, this stedfastnes and constancie in God.

2 Secondly me thincketh, we haue a moste singuler & notable

notable place, in the 11. cha. of the Epistle of S. *Paule*, to the *Rom.* verse. 29. where he saith: that the gifts, and the calling of God, are without repentance: meaning thereby, that such graces, as God bestoweth vpon his childrē, are irreuocable and vnchangeable, the reson is, because hee that giueth them, will neuer alter his purpose and deed. Whereby we may see, that the certaintye of Gods graces, is not in respecte of oure selues, nor of anye thing that is eyther within vs, or without vs: Neyther yet in respecte of oure feelinges, because our fayth is faint, and when we loke into oure sinnes, wee shall ealelye finde in vs matter,

why the lord should depriue vs of his benefites (though in deed he doe not) by which we may be drawn to a mãmering of fayth or doubting: But it standeth and dependeth wholly vpon the immutabilitie and vnchãgeablenesse of God himself, and his eternal counsel and loue, and therefore impossible that euer it should be remoued.

3 Hereunto we may adde a third reason, taken from the nature of suche speeches, as God vseth in his worde to expresse this matter by. Ro. 8.9. it is sayde, that Gods spirite dwelleth in vs: In which place he vseth a word that signifieth to dwell in vs, as a mã doth in a house:

not

not as a tenaunt at will verely, to depart away (as we say) at the quarters ende, or at the Lordes pleasure, because howsoeuer man is inconstant, louing to day, and hating to morrow, yet God remayneth alwayes lyke vnto him selfe, without any alteration or chaunge at al, but as it were in state of fée simple, for terme of lyfe, or as the Apostle *Peter* meaneth, speaking of the duety of the husband towards the wyfe, requiring of him, to dwell with his wyfe according to knowledge, that is to continue with hir, so long as they two shall lyue together: For he vseth the same word in composition, that *Paule* doth to the *Rom.* in the

simple.

ſimple.

And here for our comfort, mee thinketh this muche I maye well adde, that for ſo muche, as the Lorde by his ſpirite, hath married vs vnto him ſelfe for euer, and that in righteouſnes, iudgement, mercye, compaſſion, & faythfulneſſe, as *Hoſ.* 2. 19. 20. we maye the more boldly preſſe this, becauſe that though the band of naturall marriages, may by ſome occaſion or other be deſolued: yet this ſpiritual marriage betweene the Lorde and vs, ſhal neuer be broken: which aſſurednes ſtandeth not vpō our ſelues, for we doe euery daye, and euerye howre of a day, yea euerye moumente of an howre, offer him iuſt occaſion,

cassion, to giue vs a byll of diuorce, and to put vs away from himselfe, but vpon the assured good will of God towards vs, who loueth them that he doth loue, euen to the end.

Al this notwithstanding, it cannot be denied, but that Sathan by himselfe, and in his instruments, laboureth by all meanes possible, to pul from the children of god this assured certaintye, of the continuaunce of Gods grace, and fauour towardes them and in them. Which thing also, that he maye the more effectually performe, hee dothe not onely vse humaine reason, to perswade the same, but also alleageth though corruptly according

to

to his custome (as apeareth, *Mat.* 4. in the temptation of our sauiour Christ) sundry places of scripture. For humaine reason, I will saye nothing, but only because it is enimitie (till it be reformed) to the truth of the lord, but also, because what soeuer is alleadged by reason, may as easely be aunswered by the same. The scriptures, one or two, I wyll touche, and so shortly after end this question.

I The first place alleadged, is taken out of the 1. *Samuel* 16. 14. where it is sayd, that the spirit of the Lord departed from *Saule*. Wherevnto I aunswere, that this muste not be vnderstood of the holy Ghost, nor of the inwarde testi-

testimony and pledge, that the same spirite giueth vnto the heartes of Gods children: neither yet of the sincere and sound effects of the said spirite, but of some outward gifts and graces, as of councel, wisdome, vnderstãding, and such like, which the wicked sundrye tymes haue in great measure, but yet to their greater iudgement, and which also God doth euen of iustice, sundrye times take from them, because they haue prophaned or abused the same, striking them in the steede thereof, with the spirite, of frensie, rage, giddines, &c.

Howbeit I deny not, but that many prophane men & hypocrites (which are in the

Church

Churche, though not of the Churche) will, not onely in wordes make greate boaste of the assured seale & pledge of the Spirite, saying that they are perswaded, that though fewe in the worlde shalbe saued, yet they are of that nũber: but make great shew also, of some outward fruites of inward sanctification, as of hearing ỹ word, prayer, sober behauiour. &c. and yet for all that appertaine not to God. For the former boast of the spirite, without the fruites thereof: and the latter stande vppon the fruits and effects thereof, in outward shewe before men, and yet haue not the sincere seale of the same: or if they would seeme to haue

it

it, it is but an imagination or conceit: or els they want that, which maketh vs acceptable to God, and comfortable in oure selues, to wit, soundnes of conscience, in the things we know, beleeue or practise.

Wherefore that euery mã may be the better able to discerne of him selfe, and so to sunder him selfe, from the prophane and hipocriticall people of the world, I would wisshe him to enter into his owne heart, and to try, how the reformed affections ther of, and actions proceeding from the same, stande towardes the Lord, that is to say, to see, whether notwithstanding his manyfolde imperfections & defecte, (which

must

must of necessitye dwell in vs, so lõg, as we carry about wt vs, this body of flesh) he loath & hate the things that are euill, and loue and like the things that are good, per forming them in such measure, as God hath inabled him, not with a mind to deserue anye thing at Gods hand, as the papistes do, because he knoweth ỹ the lord may condemne him, not for his sinne, but for his righteousnesse, if he shoulde enter into a straight examinatiõ, and account with him for the same: nor to the ende to get glorie and commendation amongst men, as many vayne glorious and hypocriticall people do, but onely that he might set forth gods glory

glory and praise in the middest of a frowarde & crooked generation, & cheerefully do that, which God hath inabled him to performe, to the glory of his own name, and the good of his seruaunts.

Ye that can thus soundly and vprightly in deed examine him selfe & his owne heart, shall not onely find him selfe thorow gods goodnes, seperated and sundered from prophane, and hypocriticall people, boasting much of the thinges, which in truth and substance they haue not: but also shal feele, that how soeuer outwarde giftes, may and do, and that euery day decay thrcw gods iuste iudgement in the wicked, yet the inwarde graces

of Gods holye spirite, shal dayly more & more abounde in him and suche as hee is, though not in perfection in this life, yet in such plentiful measure, as the Lorde shal see to bee good, for the aduancemente of his owne glorye, and the good of his seruauntes: The Lorde no doubte making vs, to feele some wants in this life, not only thereby to instruct vs, to hunger and thirst after eternall life, where the fulnesse of all perfection is laid vp in store for vs, but euen in this life to teach vs also, as not to be puffed vp aboue measure, in the consideration of Gods graces in vs, (a fault which wee mighte easilye fall into, if we were con-

continuallye in comforte of conscience and wel doing) so not to bee discouraged, in the dayes of our afflictions and heauinesse, because that hauing once tasted of those eternal mercies, we cannot but feele them again, to our vnspeakable ioy, howsoeuer the sight of our sins, & Gods iudgemente againste vs for the same, do for a while stād betweene vs and them, to the ende that afterwardes they may be more sweete & comfortable vnto vs. For we know by experience, and that in earthly thinges, as meate, drinke, apparel. &c. that those things which mē haue in al fulnesse and continuaunce, doe nothing so much like or delight them,

as

as when there is some entercourse, or chaunge from the same.

2 The second place is taken out of *Psal.*51.11. Take not thine holy spirit frō me. Out of which place they reason thus: that if god did not take his holy spirite frō his children, in vaine did *Dauid* thē make this petitiō and prayer. But I answere, that *Dauid* speaketh this, rather in the consideration of ỹ, which by his sin he had deserued, to wit: that he should be depriued, of all the graces of god, and namely of his holy spirite, than to declare any such matter to be in God, as when he haty once giuen it, to with drawe the same againe, or to take it away.

It

It is no good kind of dealing with God, nor comfortable to his children, to suppose God to be such a one, as manye tymes in beholding of their owne vnworthynesse, they doe, not onely in thought conceiue him, but in wordes affirme him, and speake him to be. For so we maye some vniustly charge the Lorde, with many matters, wherof he is most free, and iustlie condemne oure selues, for oure wicked thoughtes of his maiestie, and our vngodly wordes against him. Wherefore you see, that notwithstanding these two, and such like places of scripture, which Sathan abuseth to shake oure faith, and to drawe vs into

distrust

diſtruſt of God by. yet this remayneth ſure, that the ſpirite, effects, fruites, & pledge of the ſame, beeyng in deede once beſtowed vppon Gods children, do neuer departe from them, howſoeuer they maie be raked vnder, or ouercouered rather, for a while with the aſhes of our owne corruption, and the reliques of ſinne remaining in vs. By which meanes in deed, Satan would perſwade vs, that the ſpirite of God is taken from vs, becauſe the fruites and effects therof appeare not: that ſo he hauing once ſetled, that imagination in our heartes, hee might raigne ouer vs, as a tyrant, at his owne wil carrying vs headlong, into the

whirle-

whirlepoole of destruction.

But it is a bad conclusion of Sathan, and we must beware, that we yeld not vnto him, when he sayth: You haue now no fruits, nor effectes of the spirit, therefore you haue not the spirit. The ashes raked ouer the fire, take away frō vs, the heate and the lighte of the fire, may a man conclude that therefore there is no fire? The extrēme colde of winter, maketh the trees to seem dead, because they yeelde no fruite, and their leaues are fallen away: shall we therefore conclude they are dead, or are not trees? the thicke clouds, in glomie and close daies doe keepe from vs the heate of the sunne, and in

som:

some measure lessen ẏ light of it: shall we therefore say, there is no sun? Ny let ẏ be far fro vs, for ẏ were to destroy ẏ workmanship & creatiõ of God. Nay rather, we make an account, and hope also, ẏ the fire will be more cleare, when the ashes are removed: the trees will be more fruitfull, when the extremity of winter is past: and that the sunne will be more warme and comfortable, when the clouds are dispelled. And why should we not in like sorte perswade our selues, not onely that the spirite is in vs, though the fruits and effects therof appeare not: but also that we shall bring forth, more aboundance of good things

after

after that ỹ Lord, hath once remoued farre from vs, the corruptions of oure cursed nature, which doe so darken and ouershadow, the gracious effects of his holy spirit?

Miserable, yea most miserable of all men, were the childrē of God, if they shold not find & feele this in themselues. For this is moste true, that if wee haue not Gods spirite, dwelling continually in our hearts, wee cannot either pray earnestly, or heare Gods worde reuerentlie, or rightlie rise vp after our falles, or stedfastly beleeue the truethe of Gods promises, or doe anye thing acceptable in ỹ sight of god, profitable to oure brethren, or comfortable to our owne

consciences. And therefore wee may see, that Sathan & his instrumentes, by bringing suche straunge conclusions into the worlde, do labour nothing els, but to destroy our knowledge, to supplant oure faith, and to stop againste vs the waye of repentaunce, that so in hardnesse of heart and vnbeliefe, wee mighte bee detained of him at his pleasure, as his Prysoners in perpetuall darknesse.

Wherefore, let vs rather, for the auoiding of these extreme mischiefes, imbrace the truethe of his holye doctrine, wisely notwithstanding alwayes discerning, betwene the workes of Gods spirite in vs, and our owne cor-

corruptions, and Sathans assaults: labouring to cherish, and make much of the one, as the moste singular meane and instrument, of our spirituall comforte and consolation in Christ: And indeuouring to beate backe the other, as the high way to hell, and a moste terrible headlong downefall, to eternal condemnation, least otherwise iumbling & confoundi g them together, we debase God, and exalt our selues, or els in the sight of our own wretchednes. so far cast downe our selues, that we feele no comfort or consolation, of Gods mercies in Christ. And this much concerning your first question, wherein I haue beene some

what more large, both be-
cause it is of verie great im-
portaunce, and because also.
that the large discourse vp-
pon this, may in some mea-
sure, cleare some of the rest.

2 Now I come to the second
wherin you demaund, whe-
ther Gods children, maye
fall sundrie times, or twise
at the least, into one and the
selfe same sinne: wherevnto
this muche I saye in fewe
wordes, that if we woulde
1 but loke vppon the particu-
lar examples of Gods chil-
2 dren and seruaunts: or con-
sider the slipperie and rea-
die inclination, of our own
nature vnto euill, yea and
that after regeneration, we
shal find the case, as it were
ouer ruled vnto vs. To be-

gin

gin with these two, as they lie in order,

No man doubteth, but that *Abraham* the father of the faithful, was gods deare Childe. Al men againe are resolued, that for him to denie, *Sarah* his wife, to be his wife was wonderful weaknesse. And yet we see, that he fell twise into this infirmitie, once in *Egipt*, as appeareth: *Geneses*. 12. 14. 15 &c. And an other time in *Gerar*, before *Abimelech*, the King of that place, as appeareth *Geneses*. 20. 2. 3 &c. The like in an other Sinne, may be sayd of *Ioseph*, who as it appeareth. *Gene*. 42. 15. 16. fell twise, into this great transgression, to sweare by the life of *Pharaoh*. And the same

I

in an other ſinne, maye be affirmed of *Dauid*, of whom the ſcripture beareth witneſſe, that he was a man according to Gods owne hart.

All men, ſpeciallie thoſe that are inlightened with the knowledge of Gods truth, condemne for adultry the taking of another mans wife: and if they be rightly taught of God, they holde that they two, to wit one man and one woman, ſhal be one flesh, and therefore the taking of more, muſt of neceſſitie be the ſinne of adultry & whoredome. Now we know that *Dauid* did not onely take *Bathſheba Vriahs* wife, but kept al the dayes of his life, after he had once taken them, fyre wiues and ten

ten Concubines. And what was this else in truethe and effecte, but to fall sundrye times, into one and the selfe same sinne: yea to continue in the same.

As for that that some alleadge, either in the way of excuse, or to lessen the office of the Fathers, in having manye women, to wit, that it was permitted for increase sake, I saye that it is not onely a meere dotage of theire owne brayne, but directlye contrarye to Holye scripture. For if euer *Poligamie*, or the having of manye women had bene lawful in that respect, it had bin in the beginning of the world, when there was such greate scarsitie, that there was no

more persons but *Adam* and *Heuah*, and yet euen thē the Lorde himselfe, thoughe hee had aboundaunce of spirite, made but one, and rather that one, than manie, not onelie to shewe vs what we shoulde doe, but also because he sought a godlie seede: So that it cannot be denied, but that *Dauids* life was wonderfully tainted and stained with vncleannesse: which I alledge not to the ende anie man should be hardened, by this or any such like example in sinne, but rather to proue the trueth of the conclusion, that Gods children haue and maye fall sundrie times, into one and the selfe same iniquitie.

2 And as this is proued by exam-

examples, so a reason taken frō our natural corruption, wil easilie cuince and proue the same. That vncleane thoughtes and idle wordes, are sinn before God, no man of sound iudgement will denie the same: I saie of sound iudgement, because the papists in dæd holde, that motions to sinne, or thoughtes to euil, so a man doe not in his vnderstanding approue them, are not sinne, whiche is a beastlie and absurd conclusion. Now in the examination of our owne soules, shal wee not finde, that wee haue sundrie times bin moued and stirred vp, to vngodlie imaginations: And that wee haue manie times spoken idle and vnprofita-

ble words?

To make this plaine in one particular more: The Lord condemneth, as a trãſgreſſion of his lawe, the ſin of lying. Dothe not euerye one of our hartes telus, that either for feare, or for flatterie, or for fauour, or for oure owne gaine and glorie, or for ſome other carnall and worldly reſpect, we haue in the daies of our life paſt, lyed more than ten times? If any mã woulde be ſo ſhameleſſe as in wordes to goe about to cleare him ſelfe in this caſe, woulde not the teſtimonie of his owne Conſcience, euen while he were in ſpeaking of it, and that not onelye in a generall notice, but in particularities

of

of his owne remembraunce conuince and condemn him for the same?

And as for that which Sathan and his instrumentes vse to obiect, that it cannot be iustly said, that that man hath truely repented him of his former euilles, that falleth againe into ỹ same: I saie that the Deuil speaketh lyke a Deuil in this behalfe, and that his instruments bewray great grossenesse and ignoraunce, at the least, if not wonderful malice, while they doe so inlarge the matter of repentaunce, as though it shoulde fence vs from the force of sinne following, whereas the Lorde hath speciallie ordained it, as an effectuall in-

strument

ſtrument to ſeale vp the for-giuenelle of former tranſ-greſſions. Therefore, to con-clude this point, let vs not harken to theſe ſleights and ſubtilties of ſatã, but let vs loke rather at his drift, who laboureth hereby, either to ouerwhelm vs, with ỹ ſight of our ſinnes, or els to make no conſcience at all of the multitude of them: Both which faultes (brother) I muſt nedes tel you, are ve-rie rife now a daies, but yet the lattermoſt rife and com-mon, ten to one being ouer-taken with this corruption, that they haue no remorſe of conſcience for Sinne, or regard and care of well do-ing. Yea let vs labour to profitte further, euen by the

infir-

infirmities of the Saintes, gone before vs, because in them we see our selues, and our owne corruptions, and Gods great mercie with all pardoning the transgressions of his people, wherunto we shall doe well to looke sundrie times, because they are to vs so manie particular assurances, of the truth of Gods generall promises, seeing we know and beleue that looke what sinnes they had, we haue the same, and looke what mercy was shewed to them, the like shall be shewed to vs, the reason is, because God doth alwayes continue like to him selfe: and with al, let vs haue an eye to our owne slippes and slides, euen to profit by them also,

also, not to lie wealtring in them, because we offend often both in many thinges, and also in one and the selfe same matter and manner, but rather more couragiously in the strength of our Lord God, and the power of his worde, to fight against the same, taking vnto vs the whole complet harnisse of God: And then no doubt but the Lorde beholding in vs, as our infirmitie on the one side, so our wil to war againste sinne on the other side, wil graciously pardon our weakenesses, and mercifullie accept our willing mindes, in the spiritual cõbat, neuer leauing vs vntil such time, as he haue in the strength and power of his spirite,

ſpirite, ſet vs free from all theſe aſſaults, by gathering vs vnto his eternall glorye, which is the end of oure life in this life, & the finiſhing of our faithe and hope in the life to come.

Your thirde demaunde is, whether euery actual ſinn, committed of knowledge, may iuſtly be counted a ſin of preſumption: and whether Gods ſeruauntes maye bee ſaide to commit preſumtuous ſinnes? This queſtiō ſeemeth in my mind, to containe in it two partes: the one concerning preſumptuous ſinnes, and the other reſpecting ſome perſons, ỹ eyther doe, or maie commit them. To the firſte I aunſwere negatiuelie: To the 3

ſecond

ſecond I aunſwere affirmatiuelie: and behold the ſeuerall reaſons, of theſe two ſeuerall, yea contrarie aunſweres of mine.

I ſaie that euerie actuall ſinne, cõmitted of, after and againſt knowledge, may not nor ought not, in anie equitie, to be counted a preſumtuous ſin. For there is more required in that ſinn of preſumption, than either an act or knoweledge going before the act, that the act is euill, to wit, (euen as the woorde alſo it ſelf importeth) a conceiuing before hande, that God wil bee mercifull, notwithſtanding that grëuous tranſgreſſion, the partie offending alſo vſing, or abuſing rather, the mercie of

God,

God, which should lead him to repentaunce, to al licentiousnes, turning the grace of God into wantonnesse, and as though the coardes of his owne corruption, were not strong inough, to draw on to sinne, hee laboureth to bring, according to his owne cursed nature, darknesse out of light.

Againe on the other side, I saye that manye sinnes in knowledge, thoughe neuer committed actuallie, maye iustly be counted presumptuous offences: as for example, when a man, setting aside Gods iudgements pronounced, to discourage from wicked thoughts, and trampling vnder feet, in the prophanesse of his owne heart,

the

the mercies of God, whiche God hath set forth to allure men to wel doing, hee dothe yet notwithstanding foster & foade continuallie in himselfe euill imaginations & cursed thoughtes, not labouring to range his affections to the obedience of Gods good will, but laying as it were the bridle in his owne necke, doth runne riot to all excesse of wicked thoughtes and deuilish imaginations.

And this is the reason that leadethe mee to bee of this minde, because, that as ther is a sinne in action, so also there is a sinne in affection before God: and as sinne in action, may bee committed contrarye to knowledge, so may sinne in affection likewise:

wise: and as there maye in the act of sinne, be a presuming of Gods mercie, so there may be in the thought deuise and consent to sinne also.

In this question of presumptuous sinne, it seemeth to me, that the matter of sinne it selfe, is not so much to be regarded, as the manner whereby it is committed, and the mind of the mā that doth the same Wherin it shalbe good for you, to obserue both the degrees therof, and the proceedinges of the same, as in all men generally, so euen the regenerate particularly.

All ỹ are soundly taught of God, do know by ỹ truth of his worde, and must con-

feſſe by the ſighte of their owne wretchednesſe, that they are conceiued in ſinne, and borne in wickednesſe: and that this is conueyed ouer as it were an inheritaunce, vnto al fleſhe, not by apiſh imitation only of our corrupt parẽts, as the *Pelagians* fantaſied, but by natural propagation, thorow the taint of ſinne in *Adam*, from whõ by lineal ſucceſſion, we al come: ſo ẏ to liue & breath is nt more natural to vs, thã original vnrighteouſneſſe.

Now this ſame ſinne and iniquitie, wherein we are conceiued & borne, doth in al men, before regeneration equally ſpread it ſelfe, into theſe boughes or braunches: to wit, motion to euil

in

in the mynde, whiche the ſcripture calleth luſt; and condemneth for ſin, whatſoeuer the Papiſtes ſay to the contrary: ſecondly into conſent to euill in the vnderſtanding, as when a man in his mind alloweth of that which he hath beene moued to: And thirdly into a practiſe and perfourmaunce of that euill, whereunto a man hath beene moued and conſented, eyther in worde, if it be a ſinne to be committed in worde or in deede, if it be to be committed in deede, or in both as many ſins maye, and haue beene committed both waies.

I pray you remember that I laide before, that this ſin, doth in all men before rege-

neration

neration equally spreade it selfe, &c. Which words I added for two special causes: one is because an Englishe Phisition, going vnder the name of *D. I.* (whome I thinke good to expresse, that the good men of that profession, may be cleared frō such corrupt and absurde opinions) hath put downe in an English booke of his, called the arte and science of preseruing bodye and soule, &c. that men are in their firste parentes depraued, some more and some lesse, & that all men are not to be counted like vicious, vnhoneste or vngratious, notwithstāding our originall fal in *Adam*. Wherein (as in many other thinges also) he hath shew-

shewed him selfe, whatsoeuer skil hee hath, or woulde sæme to haue in phisicke, to bee but a badde and an vnsound deuine For he plainlye declareth him selfe, not onely to be vtterly ignorant of Scriptures, but also to haue no true insyghte into the corruption of mans nature, nor yet to bee well acquainted with the fruites & effects of originall sinne.

For this is most certaine, that thoughe all men make not the like outward shew of euil, and corruption, yet the seed and root of all sinne, doth by nature reste in all men alike, which perhappes was the matter that deceaued the man, bee not then knowing, howe to discerne

betweeu the ſeede of ſinne, and the manifeſting thereof by woꝛd oꝛ deed. Foꝛ this is true, that though the ſeed of ſinne be alike in all, yet you ſee, ẏ euen amongſt many ẏ knoẅ not God, it is reſtrained frō bꝛeaking foꝛth, in ſome foꝛ feare of puniſhmēt in other ſome foꝛ hope of gaine, in ſome foꝛ getting of gloꝛi, & in other ſome foꝛ one cauſe, & in ſome foꝛ another.

The other cauſe is, foꝛ that I would haue the godlie to vnderſtand, what it is that putteth a difference betweene them and the wicked of the woꝛld: to wit that excellent woꝛke of regeneration, oꝛ neẅ bẏꝛth, which is bẏ the ererciſes of the woꝛde, and the woꝛking of the

the ſpirite begun and conti-
nued in them, not in perfe
ction in this life (as ſome
fantaſtically imagine) but
in ſuch meaſure, as ỹ Lorde
ſæth to be conuenient, for ỹ
aduauncement of his owne
glory, and the good of his
children: in whom, notwith-
ſtanding this excellẽt grace
beſtowed vpon them, there
are certaine reliques and
remainders, as of originall
ſinne generallie, ſo of the
fruits and effectes of ỹ ſame
ſin, they being many tymes
not onely moued to euill, in
the mynde, but conſenting
to the ſame, in their vnder-
ſtanding, yea labouring to
practiſe, or rather ſome-
times practiſing both in
word and dæd, that where-

vnto they haue bẽn moued, and yẽlded consent.

And wee haue hereof a double testimony: to wit the particular examples of many of Gods children going before vs, as of *Dauid, Peter Paule, &c.* and the testimony of our owne harts accusing vs, ẏ many times wee haue beene moued to euyll and consented to the same, yea that we haue accomplished it in worde or dẽde or both. And yet great difference betweene vs and the wicked in this point, not onely in that they continually commit it, to the heaping vp of the full measure of their iudgement: and we doe but sundrie times fall into the same, to the ende that we might

mighte haue a taste of oure owne corruption, and so bee humbled: but also in that they take singuler delighte and pleasure in the same, both before the doing, and while it is in action, yea, euen then when it is done & past, manye wicked men (as appeareth by dailye experience) reioycingly & boastinglie telling of their vngodlynes, whereas the heart & affection of Gods children, is manie times stricken with wonderful grief, in ỹ thoght or action of sinne, and that not only before the committing, but euen in the verie time of doing the same, yea many a time after, when they thinke vpon the same, and the great iudgementes,

that by the meanes thereof, they had pulled vppon them selues from God.

And yet to speake somewhat more fully and plainlye of this matter, we are to note, that euē in such course and order as God worketh our regeneration in vs, so according to the measure of the same, bestowed vpon vs, doth sinne creepe vpon vs. or rather how wee our selues perceiue the fraud and force of sinne in vs, in stealing vpon vs.

1 In our regeneration, first the Lorde reformeth oure knowledge, graciously turning oure darkenesse into
2 light. Secondly, he allayeth the amendement of our corrupt, crooked, and curssed affections

fections: And thirdly, he la- 3
boureth to correcte oure vn-
sauourie woordes and wic-
ked actions. And euen by ỹ
like steps, shall we finde sin
to proceed in the regenerate,
or as I sayd before, to creepe
and steale vpon them. For 1
firste a man shall see, yea
they them selues shall feele
in themselues, a sinne done
wittingly, notwithstanding
ỹ light and knowledge that
God hath bestowed vppon
them: the corruptiõ of their
owne heartes blearing and
blotting out for the time,
the reformed iudgement,
that the Lorde hath giuen
them before. Secondly they 2
shall perceiue a sinne in thẽ
selues, which is done wil-
lingly, that is, the whole af-

fection of the ſoule, and all the parts and powres thereof as of the bodye likewiſe, conſenting thereto, the preſent pleaſure of ſinne, which endureth but for a while, carrying them with a full ſwinge into that extremitie.

3 Thirdly, they do euen fall to the deede of ſinne it ſelfe ſometimes, whileſt they doe throwe negligence and careleſneſſe for a tyme, forget both Gods Iudgements, ſet down, to deterre them from ſinne, and his mercies propounded to draw them to obedience, which may be coũted after a ſort, a wilful ſin, or they bee ſayde to haue ſinned wilfully, though not to deſpite the Lorde, but yet throwe forgetfulneſſe, yea

euen

euē of set purpose as it were to doe the thinges, that in knoweledge and will they do, and that iustly dislike.

The proof of these points, we may see in our selues, by examining our owne harts, the Lord sometimes strengthening vs, to withstande the motions of euill, while wee checke and controll our selues for our vile thoughts, and so nippe of sinne in the first sprowting therof: sometimes hee suffering vs to proceed a degre farther, euē to consent vnto the same, & to approoue of them, the lord yet strēgthning vs, to strike our selues on the heart, and to say, what miserable wretches are wee, that do thus loade and foster sinne in our

owne breast, to the displeasing of God, & the condemnation of our owne soules. Yea sometimes we proceede so farre, that we doe both in word and deede, commit sin, conceiued before in thought & yelded vnto in affection: the Lorde notwithstanding by repentaunce pulling vs out of the same, to the ende he might declare, the great care and loue, he carrieth to his children, who will not haue vs perish eternally in our sinnes.

Wherefore in a word as it were to conclude, the firste part of this question, I am perswaded, that euery actuall sinne (knowledge and affection concurring with the same) being committed wilful-

wilfullie (which what it is I haue before declared) is iustlye to be counted a sinne of presumption, or a presumptuous Sinne, and otherwise not.

Now shortlie to speake of the second part of this your demaunde, I say that Gods children haue and maye fall into these sinnes, whilst that thorowe the reliques of naturall corruptiõ remayning in them, and the pleasures or sweet delights of iniquitie, they forget Gods mercies and iudgementes: and that this is so, may appeare by the holy Prophet Dauid himselfe, who in the 19. Psal. vers. 13. prayeth the Lorde, not onelye to keepe his seruaunt from presumptuous

ſinnes, but alſo that if he do fall into them, they ſhould not rule or raigne ouer him: which petition ſurely, hee néeded not to haue made, if he eyther had not, or might not fall into the ſame ſinne: for in vaine is it to praye to be kepte from that ſinne, whereinto hee was ſure hee ſhould neuer fall.

For mine owne parte, I take not preſũptuous ſins, to bee the ſinne againſte the holie Ghoſt (whatſoeuer other men haue vttered concerning the ſame). And ſure I am that the children of God, haue and may fal, throw naturall corruption into all ſinnes ſauing that: as Noah into drunkennes, Lot to inceſt, Moſes to diſtruſte,

Aaron

Aaron to set vp Idolatrie, Dauid into whoredome, and other horrible vices. Peter into the deniall of Christ. &c. and that after knoweledge & light receiued: and therefore they may commit presumptuous sinnes.

If any man will say, what difference then between the good and the bad. I answere, it is not in respecte of themselues, as by nature: but in respect of God, who by the grace of regeneratiõ, and the gifte of fayth, and the fruits therof, discerneth betweene the one and the other. For exãple, the wicked I runne a continual course in sinne, and multiplie iniquitie vpon iniquitie, whereas the godly doe but nowe & then,

then, as it were in respect of the other, thorowe infirmity
2 fall into it. Againe, the wicked commit vngodlinesse with greedines, their harts or their consciences seldome or neuer controulling them for it, or if they doe, it is but as a flash of fire that sodainly appeareth, and as soone vanisheth awaye, whereas the affections and will of the godlie, doe manie times stand vp against the actions of sinne in them: according to that saying of the Apostle *Rom.* 7. 15. I allow not that which I doe, for what I woulde, that I doe not, but
3 what I hate, that I do. Lastlie, the vngodly lie weltring in all their sinnes, whatsoeuer they haue committed with-

without Repentaunce or amendment of lyfe: whereas ỹ godlie, howsoeuer they bee ouertaken and striken with the sting of sin, doe yet notwithstanding, thorow Gods goodnesse, aryse to vnfained conuersiõn: I say vnfayned and not perfect, because we can neuer in this life attayne to perfection of fayth, hope, loue, repẽtaunce or anie other holie vertue. And yet no reason why we shold be discouraged, for the want of the perfectiõ of the thing, so that we haue the thing yt selfe, seeing we know it to be Gods worke in vs, and we are perswaded also, that he will not refuse the same: sith also wee are fullie certified of this, by the trueth of

God-

Gods woꝛd, that God in the fruits of our faith, accepteth vs accoꝛdynge to that wee haue, and not accoꝛding to that we haue not. 2. *Corinth.* 8. 12.

4 Your fourth question also consisteth on two partes, as your third did, and therefoꝛe I will aunswere them one after an other, as I did befoꝛe.

Concerning the assurance of the spirite, I say as the Apostle sayeth. *Rom.* 8. 9. Hee that hath not the spirite of Chriſte is none of his. So that who so euer he be, that embꝛaceth not his trueth, doeth pꝛononnce a fearefull sentence of condemnation against his owne soule.

True it is that the aduer-

saries

saries of gods grace, I mean the Papistes, haue greatlie impugned this doctrine of ỹ assuraunce of Gods spirite, and the certaine pledge of eternall saluation, and the greatest reason that they haue had, to set them selues agaynst it, haue beene this, that they could not conceiue how they should be voyde of rashe boldnes and presumption, in so saying: as though for soth it were presumption, to know, & beléeue that, which the Lorde hath manifested in his woorde, for the increase of our knowledge, and the strengthning of our fayth. Doeth not the Apostle say, that he is fully perswaded, that neither death nor lyfe, nor Angels, nor princi-

pal-

pallyties, nor powers, nor things present, nor thinges to come, nor high nor depth, nor anye other creature or thing what so euer shall be able to seperate him, nor the rest of Gods chosen from the loue of God towards vs, whiche is in Christe Jesus our Lorde. Rom. 8. 38. 39. Little do they consider, how that without this certainetie, they may bee brought, not onelye to mammering of fayth and doubtinge, whiche manie times Gods children, loking into their greuous transgressions, and Gods iudgements either in warde or outwarde against them for the same, do fal into: But into vtter desperation also, with whiche if they

be

be once thoroughly seazed, it is a hard, yea almost an impossible matter to pul them out of the same.

Wherfore as in déed men must beware of presuming, which cannot be committed so long as we know and beleeue, no more then God hath manifested in his reueiled wil for our instructiõ & comfort, prouided alwaies þ we do not so much as imagin, that those graces are of ourselues, or are either offered or giuen vs, for some thing that we haue: so they muste likewise take heede of that horrible headlong downefall into desperation and distrust, wiselye also putting a difference (euen as God himselfe hath reueilet

led in his woorde betweene weakneſſe of fayth or doubting, & diſpaire or diſtruſt, leaſte taking the one for the other, they bee miſerablie wounded with anguiſhe and griefe of Soule, and that without hope of recouerie.

The conſideration and proofe of this poincte, to wit that Gods children are often tymes driuen to doubting, though continually, throwGods goodneſſe, they be kept from diſpaire, ſhall no doubt, being rightly conſidered be profitablebath for knowledge & comforte: And therefore I doe once agayne praye you (good brother) to beare with me, vttering my minde alſo concerning that mat-

matter, speciallie seeing it doth in some sort apperteine to the present question.

That the children of God, are troubled some tymes with great doubtinges, as I sayd before, may appeare by a notable sentence, that the Apostle Paule vttereth: 2. *Cor.* 4. 8. in his owne name, and the name of the faythful, saying, we are in doubt, but yet we dispaire not: by whiche place also wee maye see, that there is great difference, betweene doubting and dispaire, the one, to wit desperation beyng vtterlie voyde of hope, as the worde it selfe seemeth to importe, and appertaining most properlie to the wicked and reprobate; The other, to wit doub-

doubting, conteining vnder it the imperfections of oure faith, and the wrestlinges that wee endure betwæne hope and dispaire, beeing also an ordinarie disease that Gods Saintes, are manie tymes troubled with all: which thinge maie playnely appeare in sundrie of the particular seruants of God: as in the father of the child, that was possessed with a dumbe spirit, Christ telling him, that if he could beléeue, it shoulde goe well with his sonne, for all things are possible to him that beleeueth: hee aunswered crying with teares and saying. Lorde I beleeue, helpe my vnbeliefe. *Marke.9.23.24.* In which wordes he speaketh of more than

than of doubting: For as he plainelye affirmeth, that hée doth in some small measure beleeue. So withall he sincerely confesseth, that if that beliefe, should be examined, eyther according to Gods owne nature, who is altogether perfecte, or according to the excellencie of fayth that should bee in them that come vnto God, or according to the great mammeringes, that be found in himselfe, yt should be found nothing but vnbeliefe.

And albeit that these two speaches, to wit, I beleeue, Lorde helpe my vnbeliefe, may seeme contrarie, yet there is no godly man, but he tryeth the trueth of these things in him selfe: For seeing

ing that our fayth is neuer perfect in this life, it followeth, that we muste nædes haue greate mammeringes and doubtinges in vs: yet so that as God of his goodnesse pardoneth vs those defectes: so (seing that our fayth, how little or howe muche soeuer it bee, is by God him selfe wrought in vs by his worde and holie Spirite) shall the same our faith bee accepted and regarded before him, because hee will not despise or refuse his owne worke.

And that which hath bæne sayde of this particular person, appeareth also excellently in Dauid, who wrestling as it were in the sighte of his owne sinne, and the apprehension of Gods iudge-

ments

mentes against him for the same doth in many Psalmes shewe, that he was brought to greate distresse and doubting. Let the beginning of ỳ 22. Psal. in stead of manie, serue for the proofe of this, where he sayth: my God my God why hast thou forsaken me? I woulde fayne knowe, what canne argue greater doubting, yea in a manner dispayre, than for a man to saye, that God had vtterly forsaken him. And yet, what more lyuelie and excellente token of faith towardes god, can a man perceyue in himselfe and others, than in his distresses, to call earnestly vpon the Lord, and that not in generall tearmes, but in the particular application

of

of God vnto him selfe, saying my God my God, &c.

This is that whiche all mans reason cannot comprehend, to wit that menne loking vpon themselues in their sinnes, and Gods iust iudgemẽts, should be wonderfully dismayed and cast down, and yet notwithstanding, euẽ as it were at one, and the selfe same instant, should thorow the gracious worke of Gods Spirite in them, and the liuely apprehension of his mercyes, be as greatly exalted and raysed vppe againe. And yet though mans witte, cannot well conceiue of this matter, there may some reason be shewed of it, because that fayth and doubting are not con-

contrarye (for ſo yf they were, they coulde not ſtand together in one and the ſelfe ſame ſubiect, at one and the ſelfe ſame time,) but they are things diuers, and therfore may very wel be found euen at one & the ſelfe ſame time, in one and the ſelfe ſame perſon.

I am lothe to purſue this matter any whyt more at large, becauſe I know ſome very good men, haue publikelie propounded the contrarie, to wit that faith & doubting, ſhould be things oppoſite: but I pray you at your leaſure, ſee what Mayſter *Caluin* hath written concerning this matter. *lib. Inſtit. 2. cap. 16. ſect. 12.* where he maketh faith and diſpaire

contrarie, and not faith and doubting: and also, *lib. Instit. 3. cap. 2. sect 37.* where you shall finde, that he playnely affirmeth, that fayth is so greatlie tossed with diuers doubtings, that the myndes of the Godlie, are seldom quyet, or at least, do not alwayes enioye a peaceable state.

It trueth consisted in a multitude of allegations, or a cloud of mẽs testimonies I coulde easelie put you downe, a greate number of places out of maister *Caluin* maister *Beza*, and sundry others, both olde and new, but I minde not to blot paper with thẽ, specially wryting to you, who I know hath not, nor holdeth not

the

the truethy of God, eyther in respecte of mens persons, or in the multitude of witnesses. The thinge which I rather beseeche you for, is that you would in a few wordes with me consider, what profit & comfort we may reape by this, and so then I will come to aunswere the other part of this your fourth question.

First, we haue our defects and imperfections layde before vs, which doth not onelye sensibly preache vnto vs our naturall corruption, and the reliques of the same in vs: but serueth also, as an excellent meane to preserue vs, from ỹ pride of our own hearts, and from entring so muche, as once into an ima-

gination or conceite of anye thinge, either within vs, or without vs, that of it selfe, may commende vs to God, speciallye as it commeth frō vs, because it smacketh and tasteth of our corruption, and by that meanes sauoureth also of imperfection, and we know that no imperfect thing can please God.

But what: shall we be discouraged in the same: And because wee cannot attayne vnto perfection in this lyfe, vtterly shake of al care & cōscience of wel doing, as Satan would haue vs: Oh let that be far from vs to yeelde to such assaultes & tērations.

May rather let vs comfort our selues in this, that all our defectes and imperfecti-

ons

ons are couered ouer in the fulneſſe and perfection of the obedience of Chriſt, and incourage our ſelues to wel doing, notwithſtanding our wantes, becauſe we knowe, that God accepteth vs, according to ỹ we haue, & not, according to ỹ we haue not, (this being alwayes prouided that ỹ which wee haue, we haue from him) wee in ỹ meane while, not leauing, of to doe ſome good, becauſe we cānot doe all good in perfection, no moze then we refuſe to yēld obedience to the law, though the ſame in reſpecte of the abſolute righteouſneſſe commaunded therein, and alſo in reſpect of our wonderfull weakeneſſe and infirmitie, can neuer bee fil-

led of vs.

Nowe, as concerning the other part of your question, I take it that ỹ best meanes for a man to assure himselfe, that hee hath the Spyrite of God, is to looke to those effectes and fruits of gꝛdnes, which it pleaseth the Lorde by the same his Spirite to worke in them, and to frame and fashion them to, not in perfection (for as I sayde before, that can neuer bee attayned vnto in this life) but in some suche measure, as it pleaseth the Lord) who doth all thinges in his children, for his owne glorie and their good) to bestowe vpon them. Of the pledge of the spyrite, beeing one singular effecte and fruit of the spirite, I

haue

haue saide somewhat before, and therefore may spare to speake of it here: and yet for the further clearing of this matter, I will here touch one or two other fruits and effects of the Spirite in particular, that by them a man may iudge of all the reste, which are of the like sort.

That praier is a fruit and effect, or worke of the spirit of God, dwelling in the heartes of Gods children, al men that know Gods truth will easely graunt. If anye should be so shameles as to deny it, our own experience will conuince them, which teacheth vs that all thinges that we do are either of our selues, or of God. If they be euil, they proceede from our

ſelues, and the curſſed cor-
ruption of our owne nature.
If they be good, they come
from the lord, who frameth
and faſhioneth vs therto, as
by his word, and the exerci-
ſes thereof outwardly, ſo by
his holy Spirite inwardly,
without the whiche in deede
the word is but to little pur
poſe, except it be to make vs
the more without excuſe.

Alſo that prayer to God,
is a good thing, neuer did a-
ny as yet deny. From God
therefore muſt it flowe, and
be wrought in vs by the
meanes aboue ſpecified, and
cannot come from our cor-
ruption, becauſe therein we
are ſo far of from drawing
nigh to God, either in pray-
er or otherwiſe, that we al-

toge-

together flye from his pre-
sence. And besides this, the
Apostle telleth vs. *Rom.* 8.
26. that the Spirite helpeth
oure infirmities, for wee
know not what to pray as
we ought, but the spirite it-
selfe, maketh request for vs,
with sighes and groanes,
which cannot be expressed.

Wherefore when I feele
my selfe in some measure,
stirred vp to pray vnto God,
as in ỹ renouncing of mine
own righteousnes, so in the
name of his Sonne Christ
applying all his merits vn-
to my selfe demaundinge
nothing but such things, as
are according to his will, I
may therin comfort my self,
that I haue the spirite of
God, because I haue thorow

Gods goodnesse one notable effect & fruit of it, the Lorde further by the performance of this holy exercise, sealing vp in me both faith, and the end of my fayth also, which is saluation, because the Apostle sayth. Rom. 10. 13. 14 that men cannot call vppon him in whome they beleeue not: and againe that whosoeuer shall call vppon the name of the Lord, shalbe saued.

The like may we say of vnfaigned forgiuing of others, that haue offended against vs, or of sounde loue towards ỹ brethren, which are in deed singular fruites of Gods spirite and workes of the same in vs, for naturally we would reuenge one in-

iniurie with another, and are so far of from loving others, that we manie times hate thē most deadlie, whom by the rule of nature and piety, we ought to loue most dearely: yea I saye further, that whersouer God giueth these graces, there he hath set downe and lefte behinde him, a notable testimonye of the forgiuenesse of our sinnes in his presēce, and of oure regeneration, which are singular pledges, that wee appertayne vnto God, and haue the hope of a better life layde vp for vs in the heauens: for our sinnes beeing once remoued, and wee feeling the same in our heartes, by vnfaygned pardoning and forgiuing of o-

thers

thers, what should we loke for, but iustificatiō in christ: And the loue of god towards vs, beeing sealed vp in our heartes, by the sincere loue and affection, that in him and for him, we beare one of vs towardes an other: what remayneth but that we should with patience expect, the most singular testimonie of that loue, which is eternall life and glorie? For as iustificatiō followeth the forgyuenesse of our sinne, so glorificatiō followeth iustification, as appeareth. *Rom.* 8

Notable for the prowfe of these poyntes, and full of woonderfull comforte to the Conscience, are these two places following. Our sauiour sayth. *Mat.* 6, 14. If we

doe

doe forgiue men their trespasses, your heauenly father wil also forgiue you. And S. *Iohn* in his first epistle chap. 3. 14. sayth. We knowe that wee are translated frō death to lyfe, because we loue the brethren. By which we may see, that these thinges, are gracious effects of Gods spirite in vs, and that they are sure seales vnto vs, of the remission of our sinnes, and of our regeneration, and by consequent also (for these followe one another) of our eternall saluation.

And that whiche I speake of these, I do wish to be vnderstode of all the fruites of the spirite, that we shal find in vs: For of like thinges, there is the lyke consideration,

tion, alwaies prouided, that we beware of two extremeties, wherinto we shall many times be violently thrust vnlesse it please the Lord to giue vs wise and vnderstanding heartes, that we may foresee the same, and grace and strength to subdue them.

1 The one commeth properlie from our selues, and the pride of our owne heartes, while we phantasy, that we haue obtayned, more graces of the spirit, than in deed we haue, and so lifte vp our selues, aboue manie other of Gods children, whom the Lorde hath more mercifully indued with suche graces, than he hath done vs.

2 The other ariseth of Satan

tan who many times wold make vs beleeue, that God hath not giuen vs suche fruits and effects, of the spirite, as wee perswade oure selues, that thorowe his goodnesse we haue attained vnto.

To represse the first in vs, it shal be good for vs nowe and then to haue an eye, to the great defectes, that we finde in our selues, of spirituall blessings: and to compare oure selues in an vpright consideration, not w̄ them onely, with whom the Lord hath not dealt so liberally that waye forthe, as with vs, that so we may bee prouoked, to magnifye the richesse of his goodnesse and to referre our gifts to right

ends

ends, that is to his glory, the good of our brethren, and the comfort of our owne consciences: but with others also, whom the Lord hath preferred by many degrées, in manye graces of knowledge, faith, obedience, &c. that so wee seeing Gods grace in them, may not enuye them, as many doe, but seeing our owne defects may therby be humbled, in our owne imaginations, alwaies notwithstanding carrying with vs, a holy desire, to attaine to the best things, & vsing such holy means also, as the lord hath allowed vs, for the performance thereof, submitting our selues continually vnto his good worke in vs, knowing and stedfastly be-

lœuing

leuing this, that if the Lord giue vs much, he doth it because he seeth, ỳ we woulde be cast down in our wants: and if hee giue vs little, he doth it to represse Pride in vs, who seing no doubt that if we did excell, we woulde be puffed vp in pride aboue measure, and so not onely swell againste our brethen, but grow into forgetfulnes of his maiesty.

And to subdue the other in vs, we are to know, that Sathan is, and hath beene, from ỳ time of his fall, continually the father of lyes, labouring by lying not onely to seduce vs miserable men, and to carry vs away from yeelding obedience to the Lorde and hys trueth,

but

but endeuouring also by debasing and defacing Gods graces in his seruaunts, to taynte what in him lyeth the honour of God, and to staine the same, because hee seeth, that ꝧ discredit which is laid vpon Gods seruants doeth after a sort light vpon the Lord himselfe, by reason of the straight & narrow coniunction, that in Christ and by Christe, is made betweene God and his children.

Neither doeth that which is commonly obiected, impugne this trueth: To wit, that the diuell now and thē speaketh truely. For if he do it, he doeth it of a malicious mynde, either to this ende that so he may the more discre-

credite the same, for wee see that some tymes good causes, by reason of dishonest witnesses, growe into some suspition at the leaste, as though they were euill: Or els to this ende, that for hauing spoken the trueth once or twise, he may haue ẏ better credite and entertaynement, in his cõtinual course of lying, muche like as hipocrites and wicked men, his children, who beare fayre shews till they haue craftilie crept into some loue and liking, and then doe afterwardes, with greater authority as they suppose, not one lie spreade abroad, but also poure their poison, into the hartes of ẏ simple & seduced. Well, to conclude this point

withall

withall, let vs assure oure selues of this, that (whatsoeuer our owne heart, or Satans subtilities will saie to the contrarie) yet spiritual graces in some measure bestowed vpon vs, and the effects of the same, which God in some sorte, inableth vs to perfourme, according to knowledge and fayth, are true testimonies of the spirit of God abiding in vs, according to ỹ saying of S. *Ioh.* in his first epistle and fourth chapter, ver. 13. Hereby we know that we dwell in him, and he in vs, because he hath giuen vs of his spirite.

5 Now I come to your fifth & last question, which concerneth comfortes, as in all afflictions generallie, so particu-

ticularly, the comfortes that either we haue, or mai haue in those that are inward and concerne the mind.

Touching this matter I would haue you firste to obserue this, euen because also it respecteth, the question we haue in hand, that all afflictions, which in this life doe fall vpon the sonnes and seruauntes of God (for with the wicked and reprobate, I mind not now to deale, and in the other life the Lorde shall free vs from all these trials) are of two sorts. The 1
one sorte is outwarde in the bodie, and of this kinde are sickneſſe, pouertie, perſecution, &c. The seconde sorte 2
is inward in the soule, and of this kinde are the sight of

our

our ſinnes, the beholding of our own ſpirituall wants, ye fæling of ſatans aſſaults, &c. If anie man will holde that there maye be a thirde ſorte compounded of theſe two, I minde not muche to diſpute the queſtion with him.

I The thing that I for mine owne part obſerue, & which I would haue you and other alſo to marke in this matter is what comfortable & profitable difference, wee maie finde betweene the afflictions of the bodye and the anguiſhe of the ſoule, which by experience both in my ſelfe and others, I haue obſerued to bee this, that in a moſte weake and ſicke bodie, there may bee founde, and manye times is wonderful ioy and

peace

peace of conscience, by séeing reconciliation wrought in the death and obedience of Christe) who is the lambe that was slayn from the beginning of the world) which hath caused the parties possessing the same, or rather possessed of it to bee so farre frō fearing bodily torments or deathe, that they haue wonderfully, comfortablye, & ioyfully, both vndergon, & also euen wished and desired the same, as sundry examples to declare vnto vs, which I minde not nowe to put downe. But if the mind bee once troubled and afflicted vnto the sence of Gods iudgemēts for sinne, it doth worke great alteration, and distemperature, euen in the

out-

outwarde man: as to take from the eyes sléepe, from the stomacke appetite, from the body reste, yea and to chaunge not the complexion onely, but the whole constitution of the parties afflicted, they for the time, taking no delight or comfort, of any thing in this life, but supposing rather ý [illegible] things tend to their greater iudgement and condemnation.

In this respecte it is that Dauid in so many Psalmes sayth, ý he findeth no rest in his flesh: by reasō of his sins ý his strēgth is consumed & worn away, & that he is become as a skin dried in the smoke: and ý he is parched and withered, by reason of Gods wrath, & many suche like

If anye man woulde de-
fende the proofe of this,
e haue besides great expe-
ence in sundrie particu-
irs of all complexions in
is age of the worlde, the
ample of *Dauid* sanctified
vnto vs in the word of God,
whome it is sayd, that he
was ruddie and of a good
countenaunce and comelie
vilage, and yet you see that
hee was greatlie distressed,
both in bodie and minde, as
the booke of *Psalmes*, and
namelie the *Psalmes* before
rehearsed, do plainly proue.
So that it is not complexi-
on (though for mine owne
part, I minde not to denie,
but that it maye somewhat
further the griefe of y mind)
but the touch of conscience,

which God giueth his c
dren, that bringeth forth
them the effectes before r
med.

2 The nexte thinge that I
woulde haue you to obser
in this question of afflic
ons, is not onelye from who
these crosses are sent and
laid vpon vs, to wit, God a
mightie, but the cauſes of
the ſame, & the endes wher
fore the Lorde doth exerciſe
vs thereby: wherin (in fewe
words to vtter ſome ſtore of
matter) this is it that I
would haue you to marke,
that though God do this to
his children, in the daies of
their pilgrimage here, and
that to diuers endes alſo: as
ſome tymes to proue their
1 patience, that ſo the Lorde
may

ſée howe quietly and
nkfully they wil receiue
uerſity, and ſet thē fooꝛth
as ſingular examples of
that holy vertue, foꝛ others
to embꝛace and followꝛ: ſome 2
tymes to trie their faith in
the ..rueth of his pꝛomiſes
made them, that ſo he may
ſée, whether they will ſted-
faſtlie beleeue the accom-
pliſhement of his mercyes,
notwithſtanding the defer-
ring of the perfourmaunce
therof: ſometimes to declare 3
his greate loue towardes
them, whyle hee coꝛrecteth
them in mercie, becauſe he
woulde not haue them pe-
riſh with the wicked woꝛld,
which otherwiſe thoꝛow ſe-
curity they were likely to
do, if the Lord did not now e

4 then

them, not onelie shake
rod at them, but strike th
with the same: sometim
to manifest and declare hi
owne great glorie & power,
either in making them abl
to endure thinges far abou
the strength of flesh and
blood, or to do things impos-
sible to oure vnderstanding:
& though he doe this, some-
times to one end, and some-
times to an other (for of one
and the selfe same thinge,
there maie be sundrie ends,
as for example: the ends of
our life here in this worlde,
are first to glorifie God, who
hath created and placed vs
in this worlde, for that pur-
pose: Secondlie, to do good to
our brethren, according to
the abilitie that hee hath in-
dued

ued vs withall, and that with a chearefull and willing mind: and thirdly, that wee mighte at the laste thorow Christ, come to eternall life. For if here were oure happinesse, moste miserable were the state and condition of the Godlie) though all this I saie be true, yet euerie child of God, shal do wel notwithstanding, euen sundrie times to perswade him selfe of this, that the Lorde doeth chastise and correcte him for his sinnes, and presentlie vppon his troubles, to caste downe himselfe, before God, in the humble acknowledgment, and vnfayned confession of his transgressions, earnestlie praying pardon of them in

Christs obedience and with all assuring him selfe, thorowe a liuely and a stedfast faith in him, that both his sinnes shall be forgiuen, and the temporall punishment in good time remoued as shal make most for gods glorie, and the saluation of his seruaunt so afflicted.

Thus haue the godly of all ages donne, as namely *Dauid*, *Daniel*, and others, & haue receiued thereby singular comfort, and no doubt so shall we, if wee tread in the same steppes. For if we confesse our sinnes, God is faithful and iust, to forgiue vs our sinnes, and the blood of Iesus Christ, shall cleanse vs from all iniquitie.

Wherupon also there wil

ensue

enie another singular con-
tion, that forasmuch as
ure sinnes, are causes of
Gods wrath, and the pu-
nishmentes, wherewith hee
rerciseth vs in this life, are
ffects of those sinnes: that
c o otherwise be, but
that the cause beeing taken
away, the effect also follow-
ing or flowing from that
cause, should cease likewise.
And that therefore, that is
most true which I affirmed
before: to wit, that those out
ward punishments, shall be
taken awaye, when God
shall see it good, whose time,
and the accomplishement of
whose purposes, wee muste
patiently thorow hope wait
for, stedfastly beléeuing, that
hee that will come for oure
succour

succour and comforte, [illegible] come quickly, and will tarrie.

And yet here we must be ware, that we doe not apply this doctrine of punishment for Sinnes further, than euery one of vs to our [illegible] abstaining alwayes from hastie iudgement of others, when we see the hande of God, by any crosse or calamitie, to be layde heauie vpon them. For howsoeuer we maie safelie say, that our owne sinnes haue pulled vpon vs, the particular iudgmentes wherewith wee are exercised, because in our sinnes, we either knowe or shoulde knowe our selues, better then we do other mē: and how so euer wee are assured

...ed by the trueth of Gods
...wozde, that the seede of al
sinne is in others, euen as
in our selues, and that ther-
foze GOD maye iustlye
punish them: yet forasmuch
ir iudgement is woon-
illie corrupted, in the
discerning of Sinne, eyther
in our selues or others, whi-
che springeth in vs, eyther
from blindnesse of heart,
or partialtie of affection,
wee manye times imagi-
ning, God to strike for one
transgression, when ỹ Lord
indéede doeth it for another:
and besides sith wee see, that
God hath manye endes,
wherefore hee so correcteth
his seruauntes, as the prowfe
of their patience, the triall
of their fayth and hope, the

ma-

manifesting of his owne power in their weakenes, & sundrie suche like: and for as muche, as both particular examples, and euident testimonies declare, that God doeth not alwayes pu his for their sinnes: as see in *Iob* (whose frendes handled that euill cause cunningly) and in the playne wordes of our saniour christ. *Iob.* 9. speaking of the blind man, affirming ỹ neither he, nor his parentes had sinned (and yet not minding to exempt them vtterlie from sinne, or to affirme them to be void of iniquity) but that it was doone for the manifestation of Gods glorie, whilest hee, by the omnipotent power of his Godhead,

restored

restored him to his sight. All this I say layde together, doth manifestly proue, that howsoeuer we may charge our selues with our sinnes
[illegible]dayes of our afflicti-
[illegible]nd that to humble vs
[illegible]e the Lorde, & to cause vs with speede to repaire vnto him that hath stricken vs, that so he y hath wounded vs may heale vs, yet we should take heede howe we deale so with others: yea & that howsoeuer we charge our selues sundry times yet to be circumspect, that we doe not at any time surcharge ourselues, or be continuall in the contemplation & sighte of the same, but rather to haue our mindes exercised, one while in be-

hol-

holding of our owne vnwor-
thines, a singuler meane no
doubte, to humble vs befor
God and man, and an other
while looking vppon the ri-
ches of gods mercies
as it doeth wonderfull
moste manifestlie app
in the forgiuenesse of oure
sins, thorow the death and
obedience of his Christe our
Lorde and Sauiour, so is it
also verie sensible to bee
seene, in the crosses of triall,
that it pleaseth him to laye
vppon his in this life, not
onelie whilst ỹ they doe not
perishe in the same, accor-
ding to whiche *Ieremie* saith
in his lamentations, that it
is the mercie of the Lorde,
that we are not vtterlie con
sumed: but also in that it
pleaseth

pleaſeth him that bringeth darkneſſe out of lighte, to make the ſame effectuall teſtimonies vnto them, of [illegible]ular fauour, and aſ[illegible]pledges, of the hope of [illegible]er inheritance, as you [illegible]ſee plainelie proued, in the next point following.

The third and laſt thinge, whiche I woulde haue you here to marke, which alſo doth moſt properlie concern your queſtion, is the greate and ſingular comfortes, that God hath left in his worde, for the vpholding and ioye of all his people, whome he exerciſeth with afflictions in this life. Men are wont verie highlie to eſteeme ſuch things, as come from greate perſonages, ſpecially if they 3

bring

bring with them pleasure and profite to them selues, and maye tende or serue to the good of others. Saynt *Paul* when he wil[illegible] nifie the minist[illegible] Church, and set it ou[illegible] thing to be muche reg[illegible] of the *Corinthians*, and in thē of all others, doth in his secōd epistle 7 fifth chapter, vse these two arguments: to wit, that God is the author thereof, and therfore it must bee reuerently regarded: and that it bringeth with it our good, to wit, reconciliation betweene the Lorde and vs, wrought in the person of his sonne, and therfore ought to be embraced, he pressing these points that he might thereby, the more

[illegible]re effectually mooue the [illegible]inthians, with readines [illegible] receiue the same, and to [illegible] thereby.

[illegible]he like maie we say in [illegible]e [illegible]ause, that we [illegible] hande. It ser[illegible]t a litle, both to pro[illegible] and comforte, in that wee know this, that all ye things that we endure in this life, are laid vppon vs from God not of hatred, as satan wold perswade vs, and our owne corrupt heart, woulde haue os to iudge, but of loue rather: for we knowe, that the scripture sayeth, that eueris child, whome the Lorde loueth, him he chasteneth, & that he receiueth no sonnes or daughters, but them whō hee scourgeth: neither yet tho-

thorow his bare sufferance as *Pelagians* haue imagined. For then he could n[illegible] be almightie, nor w[illegible] deliueraunce for vs, [illegible] he woulde, becaus[illegible] power shoulde be [illegible] and wee wonderfullie whelmed in oure distresses: but euen thorowe his eternall prouidence and appointment, because this must remaine, as a resolute trueth, that if a haire can not fall from our heades without his decree, none of these great trials can come vpon vs, but according to his especiall purpose ond apointting goodwill, who seeth and knoweth what is beste for his childrē, many times not doing that for them, which they